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NEW YORK STATE CRIME VICTIMS MEMORIAL IMPROVEMENTS TO BEGIN

Office of General Services Commissioner RoAnn Destito today announced that the New York State Crime Victims Memorial on the north side of the Empire State Plaza near the Legislative Office Building will be undergoing renovations to improve the quality and configuration of the memorial. Work will begin immediately and conclude in time for the annual ceremony held at the location each April in observance of National Crime Victims Week. The memorial commemorates fallen victims of crime and their families as well as survivors of crime in New York State and is one of 15 memorials at the plaza maintained by OGS.

“This memorial serves a vital purpose to remind the victims of crime and their families that they are not alone and that all New Yorkers hope for an end to the cause of their suffering,” Commissioner Destito said. “The improvements we are making demonstrate our continuing commitment to the pursuit of justice for survivors of violent crimes.”

The memorial was established in April 1996 with the placement of a limestone and calcite boulder. A bronze plaque on the boulder reads: “Dedicated to All New York State Men, Women and Children and Their Families Who Are Victims of Crime. May Justice Prevail.” The Memorial Walkway, a brick pathway from the monument to the adjacent sidewalk, was dedicated on April 13, 1997. The Capital District Coalition for Crime Victim’s Rights — renamed the New York Crime Victims’ Assistance Task Force — an Albany-based group devoted to increasing public awareness of the effects of crime on its victims, placed the first bricks. Each brick is engraved with the name of a survivor or deceased victim of violent crime in New York State.

In 2002, a large stone was placed in The Memorial Walkway to recognize the victims of the September 11 attacks. The memorial stone will be incorporated into the new design.

“The Crime Victims Memorial represents an extraordinary example of the essence of the many crime victims, their families, service providers, NYS agencies, and people working together to achieve a common vision,” said Albany County Crime Victim and Sexual Violence Center Director Karen Ziegler who serves as Secretary of the New York Crime Victims’ Assistance Task Force. “We would like to thank the New York State Office of General Services for partnering with us to reconfigure the memorial so that it will continue standing for victims decades into the future.”

The renovations will include replacing worn bricks with more durable ones and a reconfiguration that will change the shape of the memorial to a semi-circle from its current configuration that includes three separate brick paths. The new memorial design will ensure adequate space to incorporate 1,000 additional names over a significant time period and be easier to maintain. The names of approximately 850 people are currently included in The Memorial Walkway, and bricks with the names of the 23 crime victims read during the 2014 ceremony will be added during the renovation.

The existing blue stone bench at the memorial will be relocated, and a second bench will be added.

Although the main function of The Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller Empire State Plaza is to serve as the seat of government for New York State, the plaza has also become a special site of remembrance and tribute. The memorials on the Empire State Plaza honor citizens of New York Who have dedicated or given their lives in service to others and also include a tribute to a special American who meant a great deal to New York State, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Built by the New York State Office of General Services, the memorials commemorate the actions of the diverse groups from the community and offer visitors the opportunity to reflect on issues that touch the core of our society. The memorials celebrate the heroism of different generations and causes, each united by the common threads of duty and self-sacrifice. It is fitting that the Empire State Plaza, in the heart of the capital city, provide a place of honor for these special citizens. To learn more about the memorials, please visit www.ogs.ny.gov.

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